

EXECUTIVE SESSION

PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF: DIANA DENMAN

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held in Room HVC-304, the Capitol, commencing at 10:10 a.m.

Present: Representatives Conaway, Ros-Lehtinen, Stefanik, Schiff, and Heck.

Appearances:

For the PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE:

[REDACTED]

For DIANA DENMAN:

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SUITE 400
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

[REDACTED] Good morning, all.

This is a transcribed interview of Diana Denman. Thank you for speaking to us today.

For the record, I am [REDACTED] [REDACTED] here at the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence for the majority. Also present are numerous members and staff, who will introduce themselves as the proceedings commence.

Before we begin, I wanted to state a few things for the record. The questioning will be conducted by members and staff. During the course of this interview, members and staff may ask questions during their allotted time period. Some questions may seem basic, but that is because we need to clearly establish facts and understand the situation.

Please do not assume we know any facts you have previously disclosed as part of any other investigation or review.

This interview will be conducted at the unclassified level.

During the course of this interview, we will take any breaks that you desire.

We ask that you give complete and fulsome replies to questions based on your best recollections. If a question is unclear or you're uncertain in your response, please let us know. And if you do not know the answer to a question or cannot remember, simply say so.

You're entitled to have counsel present for you for this interview, and I see that you have brought one.

Counsel, would you please identify yourself for the record.

MR. DRISCOLL: I'm Bob Driscoll from McGlinchui Stafford in Washington.

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██████████ Thank you.

The interview will be transcribed. There is a reporter making a record of these proceedings so we can easily consult a written compilation of your answers. Because the reporter cannot record gestures, we ask that you answer verbally. If you forget to do this, you may be reminded to do so. You may also be asked to spell certain terms or unusual phrases.

Consistent with the committee's rules of procedure, you and your counsel upon request will have a reasonable opportunity to inspect the transcript of this interview in order to determine whether your answers were correctly transcribed. The transcript will remain in the committee's custody. And the committee also reserves the right to request your return for additional questions should the need arise.

The process for the interview will be as follows: The minority will be given 45 minutes to ask questions. Then the majority will be given 45 minutes to ask questions. Immediately thereafter, we will take a 5-minute break if you desire; after which time, the minority will be given 15 minutes to ask questions, and the majority will be given 15 minutes to ask questions. These 15-minute rounds will continue until the questioning has been completed by both sides. Time will be kept for each portion of the interview with warnings given at the 5- and 1-minute marks, respectively.

To ensure confidentiality, we ask that you do not discuss the interview with anyone other than your attorney.

You're reminded that it is unlawful to deliberately provide false information to Members of Congress or staff.

And, lastly, the record will reflect that you are voluntarily participating in this

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interview, which will be under oath.

Ms. Denman, could you raise your right hand to be sworn?

[Witness sworn.]

██████████ Thank you, ma'am.

Mr. Chairman, over to you for any opening comments.

MR. CONAWAY: Thank you.

Ms. Denman, thank you very much for being here this morning. I appreciate that.

MR. SCHIFF: Ms. Denman, welcome. My name is Adam Schiff. I'm from California. And I appreciate you coming here today.

MS. DENMAN: I used to live out there. I loved it.

██████████ Over to the minority, sir.

Mr. Schiff.

MR. CONAWAY: The time is yours.

MR. SCHIFF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Ms. Denman, for being here. We appreciate your willingness to speak to the committee. We're interested in talking with you about your role at the July 11 national security committee platform meeting at the GOP Convention and specifically in regards to the amendment that you offered and which was ultimately debated. So, again, thank you for traveling here to speak with us.

If you could begin by telling us a little bit about your background, where you're from, your involvement in politics and what led you to participate in the national security committee platform meeting.

MS. DENMAN: I'm a west Texan who grew up in Washington to -- education. I supported President Reagan, and I was a Reagan appointee.

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And I, during those years, furthered my interest a great deal in national security and foreign policy and peace through strength and the strength of the U.S. to stand strong, frankly, around the world. And I've continued those interests since then.

I was a Cruz delegate this time. With our law out of Texas, our rules out of Texas, you run to be a delegate, to serve, and then if you're selected as a delegate in our caucus, then you go to another district committee to be put up or asked to be on a subcommittee panel.

And I read -- I ran in that meeting -- once I was elected to be a delegate, I ran in that meeting to serve on a platform committee. I, quite honestly, requested or asked, from a form that was set out, my preference was military and national defense because those are the interests I have and have had for a really very long time. And I got that -- was given that assignment later on.

I went on to Cleveland. And before the convention started I thought a lot about my experiences in my volunteer -- full volunteer life through a great many years and the areas that I've gone to that I've supported the freedom fighters in those areas, really starting back the Nicaragua and El Salvador and those who were fighting for their freedom.

And I began to think, what has happened in this time really since the Cold War internationally, and what borders have been crossed, and the particular area that seemed to be almost the only area that has come into focus in this time has been the Ukrainian border.

I first went into Eastern Europe with journalists back in 1989 and into several countries, ending up in Moscow at the end. I went back -- I've been back several times since then with delegations or with their first free elections in these

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countries coming out of the past. And I was in Ukraine with IRI, which is the International Republican Institute, as you probably recognize. I was there for their first free election in the Ukraine.

To transfer back, I had read a lot and been aware of the years of the bread basket and the starvation and the human tragedy that really came during the years to the Ukraine. And my time there, I was assigned to an oblast. And I was lucky enough to be in an area that presented to me -- when I began to research it and think through it, presented to me an area that I could go as a -- as someone there representing the United States in these first free elections in the Ukraine.

I could go not only to the military, but I could go to pockets of pensioners and young people and those who make up the society there as well as the military. And I went down to one of the collective -- some of the collective farms as a result. So that's where I kept my focus.

MR. SCHIFF: Ms. Denman, if I could, let me bring you back. You mentioned that you were a Reagan appointee. What kind of appointment did you have during the Reagan administration?

MS. DENMAN: I first served as co-chairman of Peace Corps.

MR. SCHIFF: And during what years would that have been?

MS. DENMAN: '81 to '83, I believe.

MR. SCHIFF: And have you held any other political appointments since that time?

MS. DENMAN: Yes. I then went on to the Institute of Museum Services Board. That was also a Reagan appointee. I served in an elected position as vice chairman of the Republican Party of Texas.

MR. SCHIFF: And when were you the vice chair of the Texas Republican

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Party?

MS. DENMAN: Eighty -- either -- '83, I believe. '82 or '83 until '88, I believe.

MR. SCHIFF: And it was in the late 1980s that you first traveled to Ukraine or a different time?

MS. DENMAN: I went to the Ukraine -- gosh, forgive me. Do you have that date?

MR. DRISCOLL: No. Just your best recollection.

MS. DENMAN: '89, '90. I'm unclear. Forgive me.

MR. SCHIFF: Have you been there multiple times?

MS. DENMAN: Not to the Ukraine. That's my only time there.

MR. SCHIFF: And the trip to the oblast you were describing, that was during that particular visit?

MS. DENMAN: Yes, it was during that visit.

MR. SCHIFF: All right. And why don't you continue. I interrupted you.

MS. DENMAN: No, that's quite all right. That has -- I've been in other countries with their first free elections, but that, of course, is what you're focused on today, when I was in the Ukraine.

And I felt that having the privilege to really serve on the subcommittee that it was something as an American I would like to have them consider, that if -- having read a lot and still reading a lot about the Ukraine, the situation there that displaced people, the thousands of people that are being killed, that I felt that I would like to introduce a plank in support of those people reaching out.

MR. SCHIFF: Before we get to that, was the Cruz campaign the first campaign that you became involved with or the only campaign that you were

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involved in during the last Presidential election?

MS. DENMAN: Well, when -- I will say yes and no, but, yes, that was my original. I was originally supporting of Ted Cruz. And then when the convention came forward under our rules, of course, when the convention came forward, then I joined and I became supportive of Trump.

MR. SCHIFF: And when did you first get involved with the Cruz campaign? Was that when you ran to be a delegate?

MS. DENMAN: No. No. No. I first supported Ted Cruz very early on when he ran for Senate.

MR. SCHIFF: I see. And have you met Senator Cruz?

MS. DENMAN: Oh, yes. I know him.

MR. SCHIFF: And when would you have first met him? During that campaign?

MS. DENMAN: I met him probably the first 2, 3 months of his first campaign for the Senate when he asked me for support.

MR. SCHIFF: And during the Presidential campaign, when did you first get involved with his campaign at that time?

MS. DENMAN: It was almost a given that having supported him for Senate and being a Texan, that I felt I -- when he asked for my support, that I gave my support.

MR. SCHIFF: And about when would that have been last year or before last year?

MS. DENMAN: At the time of his announcement.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you work on the campaign or merely provide your endorsement or support of him?

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MS. DENMAN: If you would -- if I can clarify it this way, sir, I contributed. I volunteered. I went on the -- on the road as a volunteer.

MR. SCHIFF: And at some point, you ran to be a delegate to the convention?

MS. DENMAN: Oh, yes. I was a delegate.

MR. SCHIFF: And when did you -- when was the election for delegate?

MS. DENMAN: It was at the convention in Dallas of our State convention where we joined there. First, under the rules, we're guided to -- we have our State convention; then, if we have a national election that year, then we caucus for another area; and then we run for national delegate, if we so choose.

MR. SCHIFF: And so when would you have run for delegate?

MS. DENMAN: That was, I believe, May of '16 because the convention was in '16.

MR. SCHIFF: And after you were elected to be a delegate, you then ran to be on the national security platform committee?

MS. DENMAN: National security, slash, military.

MR. SCHIFF: And when would that election have been?

MS. DENMAN: At the same time that we had our State convention.

MR. SCHIFF: So, during the State convention, if you're elected as a delegate, then you can then run to serve on a part of the platform committee?

MS. DENMAN: Uh-huh.

MR. SCHIFF: And at that same convention, you were elected to serve on the national security defense committee?

MS. DENMAN: No. I was assigned that later on, but I won -- I won to be a delegate. And by our rules -- I don't know about California, but our rules, you

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are committed either on the second or third ballot to the candidate that you're committed to, and then we're released at the convention after those ballots are cast.

MR. SCHIFF: But it was at that State convention that you also ran to be on the platform committee for national security and military defense?

MS. DENMAN: I ran for the platform committee, but the RNC assigns what committee you're on.

MR. SCHIFF: I see. And so at the Dallas convention, you won election to the platform committee. Is that right?

MS. DENMAN: Yes, out of caucus.

MR. SCHIFF: And then during -- was it during the convention itself or the week prior to the convention that you were assigned to the national security military defense?

MS. DENMAN: No. It was several weeks later.

MR. SCHIFF: Several weeks after the State convention?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: But before you met in Philadelphia for the Republican Convention?

MR. DRISCOLL: Cleveland.

MR. SCHIFF: Cleveland. I'm sorry.

MS. DENMAN: Cleveland, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And in anticipation of the convention, did you have any conversations about what would go into the national security military defense platform?

MS. DENMAN: My conversations or my thinking when I drafted that

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platform and ultimately asked people that -- a couple of gentlemen that I've known, that I've read their coverage of this part of the world, to be sure that I had addressed all of the current needs that are focused from the Ukraine, if that answers your --

MR. SCHIFF: Well, let me ask it this way.

MS. DENMAN: Sure.

MR. SCHIFF: Prior to going to the convention, did the RNC provide you with a draft platform vis-a-vis national defense and --

MS. DENMAN: Oh, no, nothing like that came forward.

MR. SCHIFF: And so, prior to going into the convention, did you draft language that you wanted to be part of the platform, or how did you know what would be in the platform or what might need amending?

MS. DENMAN: I didn't know any of that.

MR. SCHIFF: So, when you went to the convention in July --

MS. DENMAN: Right.

MR. SCHIFF: -- you weren't sure what was going to be in the Republican Party platform vis-a-vis national security military defense?

MS. DENMAN: Absolutely not. I had really not focused on it since the eighties when I was more active nationally and in these areas. I had not read the previous convention platform before I went up there. I don't even have a copy of it.

MR. SCHIFF: And prior to you going up there, did you prepare an amendment on Ukraine?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you --

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MS. DENMAN: The one I submitted.

MR. SCHIFF: But you didn't know whether the language in the platform would already be consistent with that or inconsistent at this point?

MS. DENMAN: My understanding, maybe naively, is that there was nothing written prior to my being there. But I'm -- I never asked. I just thought we were given the responsibility and the occasion that if we wanted to submit a plank in that session, that I had the right to do it.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you prepare any other amendments apart from an amendment on Ukraine?

MS. DENMAN: I attempted. I tried to prepare one on the Monroe Doctrine, because it has been -- it was in our language back in the eighties forward, and it has been dropped. And I felt that it would be pertinent to put it back into our own platform, but it was not brought forward.

MR. SCHIFF: So, prior to going to the convention, how did you come up with the contents of what would be your Ukraine amendment?

MS. DENMAN: Well, it's typical of the way I have lived that when I have a subject I'm working on, that I make a list of the things -- of the ideas and the list I want to put into things.

And so I, therefore, on a yellow sheet of paper in my office -- and I office from home in San Antonio. But on that yellow sheet of paper, I wrote down the things that -- from my reading and past time over there, the ups and downs of what, as a free democracy at the moment, that the Ukraine is going through.

And I tried to address the humanitarian side, the corruption that obviously we both know happens in these emerging countries, these emerging democracies. The military, as I was reading, the weapons that are being used in that war, in that

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confrontation, all of that I tried to address and put into my plank.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you discuss the contents of your amendment with others prior to your going to the convention?

MS. DENMAN: Yes. I asked for -- there is a group here that I've read lots of their writing. I know a number of the people employed there, the American Foreign Policy Council, and I've known about them for many years.

And so they have for many years focused on Eastern Europe and certainly India and the nuclear and into China. They're doing a lot of writing on that. So I asked if they'd be willing to review and see if I had left anything out or I was inappropriately addressing something.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you send them a draft then of what you had in mind?

MS. DENMAN: It came back and forth, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And do you recall who you were dealing with at that institute?

MS. DENMAN: Yes. It was Herman Pirchner, who's the chairman there; and Elian Berman (ph), who's done a lot of writing. He's worked for them for many years too. And there is another name that came forward, apparently had reviewed it, by the name of Boris something. I don't know him, but I have inquired who he was at the time or who he is, and he's Ukrainian American. I believe he was born here. And he works on Ukrainian issues.

MR. SCHIFF: And did they make any alterations to the language you proposed vis-a-vis military support for Ukraine had that been part of the draft you sent them, or was that something that they had suggested when they sent you back their feedback?

MS. DENMAN: You're addressing actually the lethal weapons, right?

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MR. SCHIFF: Yes.

MS. DENMAN: Is that what you're --

MR. SCHIFF: Yes.

MS. DENMAN: Yeah. I'd like to step back a moment to give you my rationale or my understanding when I was in Salvador and Nicaragua in those days of supporting the freedom fighters down there.

Perhaps naively, but I saw for the first time what those people had to fight their enemy or those coming in against their society, and I saw, hands on, the weapons that were captured versus the weapons they had.

Now, this goes back to the eighties, so I've never forgotten that. But I must tell you too: I'm so old that I remember Korea and my beaus (ph) and how ill-equipped they were when we went into Korea. And they're writing home during those years that we didn't have the right supplies and the right equipment versus the enemy they were fighting.

So it's been part of what I look for or my understanding of what -- in a confrontation what both sides are up against.

MR. SCHIFF: And on the question of lethal assistance to Ukraine, was that in your original draft, or was that something that those at the institute recommended back to you, if you recall?

MS. DENMAN: I'm not sure I recall accurately on that, but the -- my discussion was certainly I want to put in there that if they should request aid from the United States, if the President approves it, by my understanding, if Congress approves it, then they should have the chance to be given -- if we have those kinds of supplies here, they should be given what their needs are. That --

MR. SCHIFF: Including lethal assistance?

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MS. DENMAN: Yes, sir. Because I believe if you go into -- and I work -- I'm around military a great deal in these days, for years now, and I believe if they go in, to put it mildly, the wrong flak jackets for the wrong climate or the wrong -- as we've read in the past -- really the wrong equipment, guns, whatever, that are not appropriate for that confrontation, that war, that they -- we would be ill-advised not to address it.

MR. SCHIFF: I understand the sentiment. Many of us Democrats and Republicans were urging the Obama administration to provide lethal assistance, so I certainly understand where you were coming from.

MS. DENMAN: Thank you.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you have any -- did you receive any input from the Cruz campaign as to the amendment?

MS. DENMAN: No. No. No. No.

MR. SCHIFF: So this was something you drafted exclusively in working with that institute?

MS. DENMAN: Yes, and working towards being on that subcommittee. That had no way, anything to do -- it was no spillover with the Cruz people at all.

MR. SCHIFF: So this wasn't an effort by the Cruz campaign to introduce something that they thought would be disruptive of the Trump campaign?

MS. DENMAN: Not in any way. That never -- they didn't even know I was going to submit the plank.

MR. SCHIFF: When you -- prior to going to the convention and going to the platform committee meeting, did you have any discussions with either the Republican National Committee or others from the convention or the Trump campaign about the amendment?

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MS. DENMAN: One of the two men that were attending the platform committee hearing that were sitting over to the side, one of those men had called me at my office in San Antonio one evening, or late one afternoon.

And he simply identified himself as a member of the Trump campaign and said he was on -- I believe, veterans affairs, veterans issues or veterans affairs, and could he be of help, or was there anything I needed. And I thanked him very much and told him I appreciated the call, that was very respectful, but I really didn't need anything.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you recall who that was?

MS. DENMAN: Yes. A man by the name of Miller, Miller.

MR. CONAWAY: Was it Jeff Miller or a different Miller?

MS. DENMAN: Matt. Matt. Matt Miller. And I had asked for his resume during the conversation so that I, frankly, knew more about where he was coming from, and I told him I would happily send him my resume. And that was the only -- I would say the only reach in.

MR. SCHIFF: But you didn't provide him with a draft of what you were proposing on --

MS. DENMAN: That was none of his business.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay. So tell me then what happened when you got to the convention or to the platform committee. I take it from what you've said that, prior to going into that series of meetings, you hadn't telegraphed what you were offering, and no one had asked you what you were offering?

MS. DENMAN: In going back and reviewing the paperwork, that I guess has been submitted to you, I realized that as -- not knowing, perhaps naively, the ground rules, sir, but as our names went -- as a list came out from the RNC of

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those who were serving on the subcommittees for platform, I received several emails of issues of people, not in that committee, in my committee, but issues that were special to some of the other delegates for support in the major body once we went into full session.

And then I realized, maybe if others were sending out a request for support that maybe I should go ahead and submit it. And so I did then, as a result of this action, I did go ahead and email from my office to the committee members my plank that I was going to submit.

MR. SCHIFF: And do you recall when you would have sent that email? We can look at the documents, but if you recall.

MS. DENMAN: If you don't mind, you double check, but I think it was the 10th, July 10? I think it was July 10.

MR. SCHIFF: And approximately how far in advance of the meeting did you send out that email?

MS. DENMAN: When did I go to --

MR. DRISCOLL: It was the 11th.

MS. DENMAN: That I headed up there?

MR. DRISCOLL: Yeah.

MS. DENMAN: It was near the time I was going on up there.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you receive any reply to the email?

MS. DENMAN: I received several replies of support actually from the email.

MR. SCHIFF: Anyone raise by email any concerns with the amendment?

MS. DENMAN: No.

MR. SCHIFF: So all of the response you got was positive?

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MS. DENMAN: It was.

MR. SCHIFF: And when you went to the meeting, what did they tell you about how the meeting would be conducted?

MS. DENMAN: That each one of us had the opportunity, if we had a plank, to present it.

MR. SCHIFF: And do you recall who was informing the -- I assume somebody was informing the group of how the process would work?

MS. DENMAN: Yes, but we were in a U-shaped situation, and there were three chairmen at the top, at the front, across. And I -- in a U-shape, the chairmen were here, and I was sitting here on this row here. So we went around.

MR. SCHIFF: So when you arrived, can you tell us about what time during the day it would've been on July 11, was it?

MS. DENMAN: 11th, and we convened in the morning.

MR. SCHIFF: So, when you convened, there were three chairmen presiding over the subcommittee platform?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And they were seated at one end of the table?

MS. DENMAN: Yes, they were seated at the front.

MR. SCHIFF: And then all the delegates who were a part of this platform committee were sitting around a U-shape table facing them?

MS. DENMAN: Yes. Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And what were the first instructions that you received, and was it from one of the three people at the head of the table?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you recall who the three people were?

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MS. DENMAN: No. But I think we've submitted that list to you. There were three -- I believe one -- Yates. Is he from Iowa or Utah maybe? Steve Yates, I believe, was involved. Then there was a gentleman from North Carolina. But I think we've submitted that list --

MR. SCHIFF: All right.

MS. DENMAN: -- to you. I didn't know anybody in that room when I got there.

MR. SCHIFF: And those three, were they also delegates, or were they from the Trump campaign or from the RNC? What was the background of those three who were presiding?

MS. DENMAN: They were delegates.

MR. SCHIFF: They were delegates?

MS. DENMAN: Uh-huh.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know how they were selected to be the presiding officers?

MS. DENMAN: No. Each State -- as far as I know, each State obviously has their own rules in the delegates selection. I'm sure California is very different from the way we select in Texas probably and the others. And I don't know about Florida, but --

MR. SCHIFF: But do you know how they were selected to preside? That would not have been done at the State level, right. That would have been done at the --

MS. DENMAN: Oh, that must be an RNC judgment call.

MR. SCHIFF: And what did they discuss, or what did any of them say as to how the meeting would proceed?

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MS. DENMAN: They simply gave us the procedural rules that we would go around, and if we wanted to submit a platform, we had the opportunity to do it. Then there would be discussion and voting on it.

MR. SCHIFF: And prior to your presentation of your amendment, had you had any discussions with anyone in the room about it?

MS. DENMAN: No. I simply walked in and sat down in my seat and waited to go forward.

MR. SCHIFF: So, apart from the positive response you received via email the day before, you hadn't received any feedback on the amendment yet?

MS. DENMAN: I don't think -- positive feedback would have been from where, that -- what do you mean?

MR. SCHIFF: Well, you mentioned that, the day before, you had sent an email out with your amendments.

MS. DENMAN: Right.

MR. SCHIFF: And you received some positive feedback in return.

MS. DENMAN: Uh-huh.

MR. SCHIFF: Apart from that, you hadn't any discussions with anyone about your amendment prior to sitting down at that table?

MS. DENMAN: I can tell you that, but I think it was after that day that some people came up to me and said they had heard, you know, that the -- that I had put -- I'd given the amendment forward on Ukraine, but I believe from my hotel, where we were staying a week before the convention started.

So this was all of the platform committee, people came -- not many at all, but people did come up and say they had heard I had introduced. I honestly cannot recall whether anyone had any awareness of it before we met in that early

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session.

MR. SCHIFF: So tell us what happened in the early session. Were you the first to be recognized for amendment, or were there others ahead of you?

MS. DENMAN: There were others.

MR. SCHIFF: Any of them offer amendments on Ukraine?

MS. DENMAN: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Any of them offer amendments on Russia?

MS. DENMAN: No, not that I -- I don't think so, not at that -- I don't even remember Russia being discussed particularly.

MR. SCHIFF: Were any of the others controversial? Do you recall?

MS. DENMAN: The wording may have been changed -- I'm unsure. But, no. I mean, I would basically say no.

MR. SCHIFF: And when it became your turn, tell us what you offered.

MS. DENMAN: Well, I had a copy, and I simply read it to the other members.

MR. SCHIFF: And how long was your amendment?

MS. DENMAN: Three paragraphs, two paragraphs, like typed out about that long.

MR. SCHIFF: And we have a copy of that that you have submitted?

MS. DENMAN: Yes, you do.

MR. SCHIFF: And what, in general terms, did your amendment provide vis-a-vis legal support?

MS. DENMAN: Well, it simply provided that we need to address the weapon part. It provided the accuracy of the weapons that perhaps needed to be used or provided at least to be looked at. Is that what you mean?

MR. SCHIFF: Yes. And we'll go through later this morning in detail more of the specifics, but --

MS. DENMAN: Okay.

MR. SCHIFF: -- I want to get the general overview.

MS. DENMAN: Okay.

MR. SCHIFF: So you offered your amendment?

MS. DENMAN: Uh-huh.

MR. SCHIFF: And what happened after that?

MS. DENMAN: There were two -- again, I didn't know anybody in the room. And there was a small table on the side, and two gentlemen were sitting there. And when I read my amendment, they got up and walked over and talked to the three chairmen.

I was not -- I did not hear any of that discussion. But it was far enough away -- well, it was a private discussion with chairmen, not with delegates. And one of the chairmen asked for a copy of my plank, and I handed it forward, and they took it.

And the gentlemen -- the two gentlemen that had gotten up from the table here and then walked over, one of them took his hand and reached down and began to take his finger and go across the page. And so, obviously, they were discussing it and reading it.

MR. SCHIFF: And what happened after that?

MS. DENMAN: They asked that it be tabled for the time being.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you later learn who those two individuals were that were seated at the separate table?

MS. DENMAN: Yes, sir, because when the plank did not get addressed

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again and we kept going around with people discussing it, I got up and went over to them and just simply said something to the effect: I don't know who you are, but you must know who I am, and I'd like to know who you are.

And they both told me. And --

MR. SCHIFF: Let me go back if I can. I'm going to try and stay in chronological order.

MS. DENMAN: Okay.

MR. SCHIFF: So these two gentlemen leave the table. They go over to the three people who were presiding?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And have a private conversation?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: You can see that they're reviewing your amendment line by line?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Although you can't hear what they're saying?

MS. DENMAN: No.

MR. SCHIFF: And, thereafter, one of the three chairmen asks that your amendment be tabled?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And what exactly did he say in making that request?

MS. DENMAN: That they would like -- I can't give you exact wording, but that they would like to table it and put it aside perhaps for further review.

MR. SCHIFF: And was it clear that that further review would take place that day, or was it -- was that indeterminate?

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MS. DENMAN: I assumed, maybe naively, but I assumed that it was certainly going to be addressed within our subcommittee. And that would be my understanding of what was happening there, would be not only finalized but voted on before we left that committee, I assumed.

MR. SCHIFF: And was there any discussion of whether it should be tabled?

MS. DENMAN: I don't believe so. I yielded that that was fine if they wanted to put it aside, you know, but that it -- I wanted to be sure it was going to come back.

MR. SCHIFF: And did they make a response when you indicated you wanted to make sure it was coming back?

MS. DENMAN: I didn't indicate it in that way at that point.

MR. SCHIFF: So, after they asked that it be tabled and you indicated your willingness, at least temporarily to table it --

MS. DENMAN: To put it aside, sure.

MR. SCHIFF: -- what happened immediately thereafter?

MS. DENMAN: Well, it continued -- they continued to submit planks going around to the right of me. And as time went on, it looked as though they were sort of perhaps beginning to sort of give the idea that we were lingering and we'd taken too much time and we needed to perhaps end on time.

MR. SCHIFF: The conversation you had started to mention with the two gentlemen --

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: -- did that happen immediately after the tabling or after --

MS. DENMAN: No. I waited. I waited while other planks were being

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discussed going around. And when it was getting near the end of this group of delegates over here, that's when I got up and went over and asked them, because I had no idea.

I didn't know if they were RNC staff or they worked for Congressmen or Senators. I had no idea. That's why I got up. But the fact that they had gotten up and gone over and discussed my plank with the chairmen, I was curious to know who they were and who they worked for.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you go over to the table where they were seated?

MS. DENMAN: I did.

MR. SCHIFF: And tell me about that conversation.

MS. DENMAN: Again, I said: I don't know you, but I guess you know me, and I'd like to know who you are.

And they gave me their names.

And then I said: Who do you work for?

MR. SCHIFF: And what were their names?

MS. DENMAN: Matt was on that end, and J.D. Gordon was the one nearest me.

MR. SCHIFF: And when you had seen those two in private conversation with the three chairs, you indicated that one was going sort of line by line. Do you recall which one that was?

MS. DENMAN: That was Gordon, I believe, more so -- he seemed to be more -- in control is not the right use of what I'm conveying, but he seemed to be the one who had the authority maybe to be discussing it.

MR. SCHIFF: Among the two of them?

MS. DENMAN: Among the two of them.

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MR. SCHIFF: And so, when you went over and asked them who they were, then how did the conversation go from there?

MS. DENMAN: Miller said to me: Oh, Diana, you remember me. I'm Matt Miller. I called you.

But I'd never seen him before, so I didn't know who he was. And he reintroduced himself.

And then Gordon asked, and I said: Who do you work for?

And Gordon said he was on the Trump campaign.

And Miller said: Well, you know, Diana, I mentioned to you I'm on veteran affairs, and I'm also on -- hired on the Trump campaign.

And I then said in, frankly, my west Texas way: If you have a problem with my plank, I'd like to know about it because maybe I have a problem with you.

And --

MR. SCHIFF: Is that where you get it from, Mike?

MR. CONAWAY: Pretty close.

MS. DENMAN: It comes from his neighborhood too.

But I honestly wanted to know who they were and where they were coming from and why they had a problem with it. And Gordon then said, well -- and he had a cell phone, and he was talking on his cell phone. And he said: I have to clear it.

Well, in another west Texas way, I said: Who do you have to clear it with?

I thought naively again, sir, that maybe -- I mean, we were in a room, and that was our assignment to participate in that meeting. Anyway, he said he had to clear it. And he told me that he -- I asked him where he was clearing it with or where he was calling, and he said he was calling New York.

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

██████████ Five minutes.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay. Thank you.

MS. DENHAM: Did you say what?

MR. SCHIFF: Oh, he's just letting me know I have 5 minutes left.

MS. DENHAM: Uh-oh.

MR. SCHIFF: Don't worry. We'll have other opportunity.

MS. DENMAN: Okay. Sure.

MR. SCHIFF: So had he been on the phone earlier in the meeting that you're aware of?

MS. DENMAN: You know, I honestly can't remember that for sure, but I think so. I think so.

MR. SCHIFF: But he got on the phone when you were in discussions with he and Miller?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And he said he had to check with New York?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And what happened thereafter?

MS. DENMAN: Well, I asked him who he was talking to.

MR. SCHIFF: You really are from west Texas.

MS. DENMAN: I really am. I pursued because I was wondering why that we were there as delegates and we were assigned to the subcommittee and that, quote, staff, whether it would have been from your office or your office or whatever, that they have the assignment or luxury or something to be what I felt was intrusive.

MR. SCHIFF: And what did he say when you asked him who he was

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talking with?

MS. DENMAN: He said he was talking to Mr. Trump.

MR. SCHIFF: And could you hear who he was discussing talking to on the phone? Were you able to hear that?

MS. DENMAN: No. I couldn't hear anything.

MR. SCHIFF: And did he step aside when he made the call?

MS. DENMAN: No. No. He stayed right in his chair there.

MR. SCHIFF: So you were standing how far away from him?

MS. DENMAN: Less -- from here to here.

MR. SCHIFF: And how long was he on the phone?

MS. DENMAN: Quite a bit. I asked him three times because I didn't believe him. I just didn't believe him. I thought he was above his pay grade perhaps, but I didn't believe him. And so I asked him very specifically three times, sort of thinking in, again, in my naivete, that maybe he'd say, well, you know, I -- well anyway. But he --

MR. SCHIFF: And what did he say each time you asked him?

MS. DENMAN: He said, Mr. Trump. And then I thought, well, there are a lot of Mr. Trumps in the world. So I didn't really -- I still don't believe him.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you ask him which Mr. Trump?

MS. DENMAN: Sorry.

Oh, goodness, no. By then I was disgusted.

MR. SCHIFF: And what happened when he got off the phone?

MS. DENMAN: Well, he was on the phone quite a bit. And he eventually got up and went back over to the front, but I'm unsure of that timing -- over to the committee.

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

MR. SCHIFF: Did you have any further discussion with him about what Mr. Trump reportedly said to him?

MS. DENHAM: Heavens no. No. No. I was just disgusted, but, no. And as time went on and discussion here and their planks, then I raised my hand and just said I, you know -- or something was said from up here that we need to wind down and be on time and get out of here.

And I thought, oh, dear. So I raised my hand, and I said: I don't want anything to happen to my Ukrainian plank. I feel very strongly about it, and I don't want for us to disband without it being reviewed again.

There was then some conversation, which I did not hear clearly, at this end of those delegates who were talking to the chairmen. And it came from those delegates over here -- sorry to not give you exact names of those people.

MR. DRISCOLL: Just to be clear, you mean delegates on the right side of the U-shaped table?

MS. DENMAN: Well, that's too easy. Yes. No, that's fine. But the delegates on the right, at the end of that table, sir, there was discussion among -- the chatter among them and discussion with the chairmen, and they needed to perhaps submit a change to the wording. And I was then asked if I would be willing to agree to that.

██████████ One minute, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, the conversation at the other end of the table between the delegates sitting at the right-hand side of the U-shaped table and the three chairs --

MS. DENMAN: Right.

MR. SCHIFF: -- was Mr. Gordon or Mr. Miller or both involved in that

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

conversation?

MS. DENMAN: I don't recall that they got up and went over there. They -- it's my recall that they only talked to the chairmen. They didn't -- I don't think they talked to any of the delegates.

MR. SCHIFF: After Mr. Gordon got off the phone purportedly speaking to Mr. Trump, did he have another conversation with one of the three chairs?

MS. DENMAN: I believe he did get up and go back over to them, but I am unsure.

MR. SCHIFF: But at some point after the phone conversation and your conversation with Mr. Gordon and Mr. Miller, there was a discussion between at least one of the chairs and some of the delegates at the other end of the table about the contents of your amendment?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And --

[REDACTED] That's time, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay. Thank you. We'll be back in the next round.
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CONAWAY: Do you need a break or anything?

MS. DENMAN: Not yet. Thank you, sir.

MR. CONAWAY: Let us know.

MS. STEFANIK: Ms. Denman, it's great to be with you today. Thank you for taking the time. My name is Elise Stefanik. I'm a member from upstate New York. But in 2012, I served as the policy director of the platform committee. So I'm very familiar with the process, and that's the context by which most of my questions will be for you.

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

MS. DENMAN: Good.

MS. STEFANIK: So just to -- there may be some repetition, but I just want to get some clarifying facts worked out. So, according to the documents, the election in the Texas caucus was May 13 when you were selected as a delegate? Is that correct?

MS. DENMAN: Do you have those dates?

I have all that on a list, and I left it in my suitcase. But --

MR. DRISCOLL: She's saying it's in the documents you provided.

MS. DENMAN: Okay.

MS. STEFANIK: So May 13. And then the other question that I think is important is the notification for your assignment to the national security and military subcommittee. It appears that was on June 27. Is that correct?

MS. DENMAN: I would think it was -- must be around that time because it was several weeks after we left, a week or so after we left the Dallas convention and the assignment, when I won the position to be on the platform, but then, of course, not given where they were going to assign us.

MS. STEFANIK: And just to clarify the process, you mentioned you were able to submit your priorities for the different subcommittees, your preferences?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MS. STEFANIK: How did that form work? Was that via email and -- was it via email?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MS. STEFANIK: And did you rank the subcommittees, or did you have to provide a resume or any additional context as to why you wanted to be assigned to those committees?

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

MS. DENMAN: I don't recall that I submitted a -- I don't recall about submitting a resume. But we marked -- I believe that's the only committee I marked or maybe another one on economics; I may have marked that. But I, frankly, did not want to serve on something that I didn't feel was my background.

MS. STEFANIK: In previous platforms, there is an online submission process for not just delegates but citizens, voters across the country to weigh in. Did you at any point submit language or feedback on the online form that the general public could use?

MS. DENMAN: No.

MS. STEFANIK: Okay. After the subcommittee assignments were announced on June 27, can you outline any other communications that you received from the RNC platform committee before the platform meeting started?

MS. DENMAN: Perhaps just: We welcome you. You've been given this assignment. We welcome you to that committee. We'll be meeting on the dates, the times.

That was mainly the outreach from them.

MS. STEFANIK: And did you at any point feel that there was any limitation put upon you as to the content of amendments?

MS. DENMAN: Specific amendment or any amendment, no. No, I did not, not at all, no.

MS. STEFANIK: Transitioning to the actual -- when you arrived in Cleveland, can you outline when you first, to your best recollection, when you first saw the draft of the platform?

MS. DENMAN: Of the finalized platform?

MS. STEFANIK: Not the finalized platform, so the first draft by which you

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

were able to review to prepare amendments. Was that the day you arrived in Cleveland? Was it the morning of the subcommittee? Was it prior to that?

MS. DENMAN: Tell me that again. I don't think we actually -- go ahead.

MS. STEFANIK: Sure. So you mentioned the subcommittee meeting the morning of July 11.

MS. DENMAN: And we were asked -- given, of course, time and place and asked to attend.

MS. STEFANIK: Correct. Had you reviewed the draft which you would be amending -- you'd be introducing planks to add to that draft? When were you given that draft for the national security language? Was it at the meeting, or was it --

MS. DENMAN: I wasn't given a draft of it. I gave it to them.

MS. STEFANIK: So at no point -- you didn't see any draft of the platform prior to the subcommittee meeting?

MS. DENMAN: No, not on my issues, not at all.

MS. STEFANIK: Okay. Again, just to clarify, on Sunday, July 10, there was no draft shared with delegates, to your recollection?

MS. DENMAN: I didn't share my copy of my draft with anyone who I got there.

MS. STEFANIK: Not your -- I'm not asking about your plank. I'm asking about the national security section of the platform before amendments were introduced.

MS. DENMAN: Would this be a previous -- from the previous convention?

MS. STEFANIK: It would be the starting document, so the starting document for the platform, the first draft before you're able to introduce

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

amendments.

MS. DENMAN: If I was given anything like that, I really didn't pay attention to it.

MS. STEFANIK: Okay. That's understandable. I know that this process is very complicated, and there's multiple steps to it.

MS. DENMAN: Well, there's lots of paperwork.

MS. STEFANIK: There is lots of paperwork. Okay.

MS. DENMAN: But I, frankly, had not at that point read anything.

MS. STEFANIK: Anything?

MS. DENMAN: Huh-uh.

MS. STEFANIK: Okay. So, on Monday morning, you talked about serving in the national security subcommittee. Do you remember how many amendments were introduced in total?

MS. DENMAN: I really don't -- I don't. I don't. But not a great many.

MS. STEFANIK: Not a great many.

MS. DENMAN: In other words, I don't believe that each member submitted a plank.

MS. STEFANIK: Were there any other amendments tabled?

MS. DENMAN: No, not that I recall.

MS. STEFANIK: Not that you recall. The process that you talked about with Mr. Gordon, Mr. Miller weighing in with the subcommittee chairs sitting at the front of the table, did that occur for any other amendments that were introduced?

MS. DENMAN: Not to my knowledge.

MS. STEFANIK: Okay. In terms of your conversations with fellow delegates, you know, Mr. Schiff walked through the process of the decision to

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

table it and then you raising your hand to request that it be brought back up --

MS. DENMAN: Right.

MS. STEFANIK: -- did other delegates weigh in on the need to bring that amendment back up?

MS. DENMAN: Not at that point, I don't believe so.

MS. STEFANIK: At any point?

MS. DENMAN: I don't -- no. No. The chairs seemed to guide that and guide that through.

MS. STEFANIK: Typically, the procedure to introduce an amendment, if there's an edit to the amendment, it would be a second-tier amendment, if you will. Did anyone introduce a second-tier amendment, or was it edited outside of that process?

MS. DENMAN: I believe the agreement was that it go in to be worked on. They did ask if I would be willing to have the wording replaced or changed. And I personally felt that, in order to have this issue or this subject go forward and remain perhaps in the platform, that I must yield to the idea that they would like to write it in a different way.

MS. STEFANIK: And how was that communicated to you?

MS. DENMAN: Verbally.

MS. STEFANIK: By whom?

MS. DENMAN: By the committee, that it would -- there was behind -- and I, to this day, don't know who all was behind the large curtain behind us, but it was conveyed to me that these things would be processed through and the ultimate wording in the platform would be worked on by whomever was behind this large curtain down at the convention center.

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

MS. STEFANIK: And was it your understanding that the subcommittee meeting was one of numerous opportunities to introduce amendments? Because that, of course, is before the full committee platform, so you would be able to introduce additional amendments at the full platform committee meeting. Was that your understanding?

MS. DENMAN: My understanding was they should be submitted to the subcommittee meeting, and then we would go into full session on another day -- well, actually, that afternoon and the next day too, that if it came up for discussion, we had the availability to discuss it.

MS. STEFANIK: You noted there were other amendments introduced. Do you recall the subject matters of any of the other amendments introduced?

MS. DENMAN: You know, I honestly don't, except that I do remember one of -- yes, there was a discussion, I believe, on the gay community. There was also a gentleman there, and I believe he -- I'm unsure whether he came up for it, but there was one who wanted to bring up immigration, that sort of thing. But I was pretty well focused on what I felt should recall back in time and go forward, the standing of America on the Republican side for the Reagan foreign policy.

MS. STEFANIK: Going back to the subcommittee just to get -- just to clarify this, when you initially introduced your plank -- other delegates are oftentimes given the opportunity to weigh in and add their thoughts -- did any other delegates have the opportunity, or did any of them speak on behalf or against the plank?

MS. DENMAN: Not really. Not really.

MS. STEFANIK: Okay. So the co-chairs weighed in immediately after the introduction of your -- of the plank, talking about tabling it?

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

MS. DENMAN: It was they discussed tabling it or submitted that idea to the rest of us after the two gentlemen got up and went over and talked about it.

MS. STEFANIK: And what did the delegates, after they submitted the idea to the group of delegates at the U-shaped table, did anyone speak up at that point?

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

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[11:10 a.m.]

MS. DENMAN: It goes back to the right side of the right table over here, that there was some discussion here with the tri-chairmen. But it was hard for me to hear accurately down here exactly what they were saying, except the idea came forward that that particular wording should be modified or changed.

MS. STEFANIK: Do you recall when -- at what point was the specific wording of "lethal assistance" raised by either the co-chairs or the staff you referenced, J.D. Gordon and Matt Miller? Was it immediately after you introduced the amendment, or was that raised later in the process?

MS. DENMAN: When I read the plank and got up, or the two gentlemen then got up and walked over and went to the tri-chairmen, that's when that wording apparently was addressed, that they -- someone felt they had a problem with it.

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. Chairman, can I interrupt for just a second? We've just been made aware that Ms. Denham provided about 2 weeks ago 200 pages of documents that were never provided to us. This was made aware during the course of this interview. That's completely inappropriate. We haven't had time to review the documents. We didn't have time to be able to frame our questions on it.

I don't want to read the documents while Ms. Stefanik is asking questions, because I want to hear what the witness has to say. I don't know whether we want to break now or after Ms. Stefanik finishes her questions, but I think we are going to need a break for half an hour to an hour to give us a chance to read the materials. And I don't know why on Earth they would not have been provided to us before now.

MR. CONAWAY: I'm not aware of that either. Let's go ahead and -- how

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

much more have you got?

[Discussion off the record.]

MS. STEFANIK: To continue the subcommittee process, to bring that to closure, you said at one point that the co-chairs had urged the delegates to finalize it. How many hours did you meet in the subcommittee before it was finalized?

MS. DENMAN: We only met until about noon, early noon that day, and then we broke for lunch. And then we went into a full committee meeting in the afternoon, process-wise.

MS. STEFANIK: And was yours the last amendment to be voted on?

MS. DENMAN: I believe so, because the others had discussed it going around, and they had submitted what they chose. And I believe, when mine came up again for review, the understanding it would be worked on for the final wording.

MS. STEFANIK: Okay. And when it came up for a final review, was there discussion among the delegates in support of the updated language?

MS. DENMAN: Not particularly.

MS. STEFANIK: Was there any opposition of the delegates?

MS. DENMAN: The discussion was primarily among the delegates who were sitting -- the committee members who were sitting here. I don't --

MS. STEFANIK: On the right.

MS. DENMAN: -- recall much discussion to the left side. They were sitting together over here.

MS. STEFANIK: And was there a roll call amendment vote on the updated language before the subcommittee finished their meeting?

MS. DENMAN: We did not see an updated language completed, I don't

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

believe.

MS. STEFANIK: So it was tabled. It never came up again that --

MS. DENMAN: But they did discuss and certainly asked me if I was willing to yield and to let it go forward with other wording.

MS. STEFANIK: And your decision was to let it go forward with the updated wording?

MS. DENMAN: Quite frankly, I wanted it to survive, and I wasn't sure -- it didn't come up for a hard vote in the committee. And I wanted very much -- obviously, when someone is -- whether whomever is elected, at least from my State, and whomever is elected as the Presidential candidate out of our State, then they really have the right to put their input into the national platform. I mean, it's just a given.

I felt and still feel that the issue of the Ukraine is important enough in national security affairs that I wanted it to be left in any way it could survive.

MS. STEFANIK: So, traditionally, after the subcommittees finish their meetings, the product coming out of the subcommittees make up the draft that the full platform committee reviews, before the amendment process.

MS. DENMAN: Right.

MS. STEFANIK: Is that your understanding of --

MS. DENHAM: That's my understanding.

MS. STEFANIK: -- of the process?

MS. DENHAM: Uh-huh.

MS. STEFANIK: So, after the subcommittee ended, you noted that was noon, and then you broke for lunch. When did you meet for the full platform committee?

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

MS. DENMAN: That afternoon and then again the next day.

MS. STEFANIK: And at what point did the national security portion of the platform come up during the full platform committee? Was it during that afternoon or the next day?

MS. DENMAN: I don't recall that it was addressed in that -- I'm unsure. I don't recall it being addressed. When we went into the full body the following day, the copies of the platform were placed on our seats, and that's when I read what was proposed. And so we voted, I believe, as a body to support the platform as it was given, I believe.

MS. STEFANIK: When you were in the full committee, according to press reports, you resubmitted your initial language.

MS. DENMAN: Not personally.

MS. STEFANIK: Who submitted the language if you didn't submit it?

MS. DENMAN: Are you talking about in the full body?

MS. STEFANIK: Yes.

MS. DENMAN: Maybe they came and took my copy from me. Would that be what you mean?

MS. STEFANIK: I'm trying to get at --

MS. DENHAM: And I'm trying to help too.

MS. STEFANIK: I know you are, and you're doing a great job. And this is a very -- as I said, it's a very complicated process.

MS. DENMAN: It's a process. Yeah.

MS. STEFANIK: Yes. I'm trying to touch upon, in the full committee process, there are also amendments that are introduced, oftentimes the more -- amendments, for example, on a subcommittee that you didn't serve on, if

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

you had an idea on economic policy.

MS. DENMAN: Uh-huh.

MS. STEFANIK: So, setting aside the subcommittee meeting which Mr. Schiff focused on, in the full platform committee, with all of the delegates from each of the States and territories, was the amendment regarding the Ukraine introduced in that full committee meeting?

MS. DENMAN: I honestly don't recall, because when I saw it printed and put on our seats when we went into the full committee that day, there were a few other issues that were addressed that were totally different from the national security/foreign policy committee. There were other issues that were brought forth that people, frankly, delegates were passionate about. And it seemed to me in my recall that that was where the focus went. It did not focus back on the national security issues.

MS. STEFANIK: Do you feel that your amendment was able to strengthen the platform when it comes to countering Russia in terms of its aggression towards the Ukraine?

MS. DENMAN: Repeat that.

MS. STEFANIK: Sure. Do you feel that your amendment, the finalized version that was included in the draft of the platform, strengthened the overall document when it comes to countering Russian aggression towards the Ukraine?

MS. DENMAN: No.

MS. STEFANIK: And why not?

MS. DENMAN: It was a broad -- the wording was very broad-based, and it covered an area of the subject but less detail on the subject. Does that make sense?

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

MS. STEFANIK: Uh-huh.

MS. DENMAN: Less detail.

MS. STEFANIK: When the final vote happened on the platform, do you remember what the final tally was on the platform as a whole -- how many delegates voted in support, how many voted against?

MS. DENMAN: Well, no, I don't remember that, but it carried, I believe, with the majority. I don't remember that there was dissent.

MS. STEFANIK: And was there any communication between the subcommittee meeting and the full committee platform process with you specifically regarding the Ukraine language? Any communication from the RNC, from the platform co-chairs, or from the Trump campaign staff that you referenced earlier?

MS. DENMAN: No. But I did go up to one of the chairmen that I saw on the floor and just said to him, I really don't -- again, I really feel strongly about my Ukraine plank; I hope it will not be lost in the process.

MS. STEFANIK: And which chairman was that?

MS. DENMAN: I don't remember. I don't know if it was Yates or -- I'm not sure. But I went up, as they were sitting -- the ultimate chairmen of the full committee were sitting on the platform, one that was sitting on the end of the platform. I went up to him and said, I don't know -- something to the effect, I don't know what the end result's going to be on my Ukraine platform but I don't want it to be lost in the process.

MS. STEFANIK: And what was his response?

MS. DENMAN: We'll take care of it. We'll see about it, we'll take care of it. It'll be there. Don't worry.

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

MS. STEFANIK: The process of amendments in the full committee versus the subcommittee, was that a different process? Or can you walk us through how that works, to do an amendment to the full platform?

MS. DENMAN: No, I can't really. We obviously came together and were there. And if people felt very passionate about what -- there were several -- about what their issues were, well, then they reintroduced it to the full body of the platform.

MS. STEFANIK: And you decided not to reintroduce the original Ukraine language to the full committee?

MS. DENMAN: I chose to try to be sure that it went forward. And if it was going to be, that it was not worth contravention on the floor for it.

MS. STEFANIK: Let me just look at this very quickly.

MS. DENMAN: And that was really a very personal decision of mine.

MR. STEFANIK: So just to go over the specifics of the amendment as adopted in the final platform -- I don't know if you -- should I provide this copy, or do you have --

MR. DRISCOLL: If you have a copy for her, that'd be great.

MS. STEFANIK: Well, I'll read it first, and then I'll provide --

MR. DRISCOLL: Do you have a Bates number I can give her?

MS. STEFANIK: Sure.

So, "To these ends, we support maintaining and, if warranted, increasing sanctions together with our allies against Russia unless and until Ukraine sovereignty and territorial integrity are fully restored. We also support providing appropriate assistance to the Armed Forces of Ukraine and greater coordination with NATO defense planning."

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At what point were you made aware that that language was going to be included in the final platform document?

MS. DENMAN: I did not see the final language until I went into full body, and they were printed and they were on our seats.

MS. STEFANIK: And that was based upon your initial language in the subcommittee --

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MS. STEFANIK: -- minus the "lethal assistance"?

MS. DENMAN: That was the wording they wanted to -- whomever wanted to remove.

MS. STEFANIK: And, in full committee, there were no other amendments to edit this particular language?

MS. DENMAN: No.

MS. STEFANIK: Any other amendments --

MS. DENMAN: Not as I recall.

MS. STEFANIK: Not that you recall.

Does staff have any other questions?

Do you have questions, Mike?

MR. CONAWAY: So, Ms. Denham, on the documents that you provided to us -- some 200 pages.

Is that correct?

MR. DRISCOLL: About that.

MR. CONAWAY: Can you give me a brief description of what those documents are? I'll need to have a conversation with my colleagues here in a minute. Can you give me a brief description of what was basically included

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there?

MS. DENMAN: When the request came from the committees here to come and meet with you, I went back through -- I didn't really know what to do. And so I went back in my office to my computer and just simply tried to print off all the emails that -- and I hope I got every one of them -- that came during this timespan.

MR. CONAWAY: All right. So these would be emails back and forth with your Texas colleagues? Is this after the convention? Before the convention? When did you start the document search, in terms of -- would this include stuff for just Texas convention or just --

MS. DENMAN: No, no. Well, it goes back to -- you know, it goes back to the beginning of being elected to be --

MR. CONAWAY: The beginning of what now?

MS. DENMAN: To be elected out of the Dallas -- the Dallas meeting of the Dallas convention.

MR. CONAWAY: Okay. Do you recall offhand, are there emails or correspondence with the Trump campaign, direct?

MS. DENMAN: Well, in the first place, no.

MR. CONAWAY: Okay.

MS. DENMAN: But I'm just thinking if there were any requests for money. I --

MR. CONAWAY: Right. Right, right, right.

MS. DENMAN: I didn't figure they were very important here.

MR. CONAWAY: Okay.

MR. DRISCOLL: Just so you know, I've got a copy of what was

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submitted --

MR. CONAWAY: All right.

MR. DRISCOLL: -- if you guys want to make a copy.

MR. CONAWAY: No, we've got that.

Let's go off the record real quickly.

[Recess.]

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[12:01 p.m.]

MR. CONAWAY: We'll back on the record.

And, Mr. Schiff, the floor is yours.

MR. SCHIFF: So, in your discussions, Ms. Denman, with J.D. Gordon, did he say what objection Mr. Trump reportedly had to the language?

MS. DENMAN: I want to clarify that I'm still unsure that it was Mr. Trump he was talking to.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, that's why I say "reportedly."

MS. DENMAN: Okay. Thank you.

MR. SCHIFF: But he at least represented to you he was talking to Mr. Trump.

MS. DENMAN: He did.

MR. SCHIFF: And did he represent to you what Mr. Trump thought of the amendment or what objection he might have to your amendment?

MS. DENMAN: No. The only things that were addressed was what his name was, where he was calling, and who he was talking to.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you feel that the language that was changed in your amendment had the effect of watering it down?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you recall, was this the only amendment in the national security/military defense subcommittee that was amended in this way? Were there any other amendments that were either defeated or where the author was forced to change their language?

MS. DENMAN: I believe not. I believe this was the only one.

MR. SCHIFF: So, to the best of your recollection, the only -- was this the

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UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

only time you saw the Trump campaign people -- Mr. Gordon, Mr. Miller -- intervene with respect to an amendment?

MS. DENMAN: Yes. Absolutely. But it was the only -- yes. I didn't see them after that session.

MR. SCHIFF: And so, when you later brought the amendment back to the attention of the committee, before it was apparently about to recess, and there was a discussion about changed language to the amendment, were you presented with a new draft to look at before there was a final decision of the subcommittee?

MS. DENMAN: I believe not.

MR. SCHIFF: Did they verbally express to you what they were going to do to change the amendment?

MS. DENHAM: No -- yes. It was certainly discussed that those were the words that they felt should be amended.

MR. SCHIFF: And those words were "lethal assistance"?

MS. DENMAN: "Weapons of lethal decision," yeah. "Weapons of lethal defensive." Those were -- of all the what I felt were the things that focused on and addressed what's happening in the Ukraine currently, that wording was the only thing that they felt should be changed.

MR. SCHIFF: And was it apparent to you that but for the intervention of Mr. Gordon and Mr. Miller the Republican Party platform would have included your language providing defensive lethal assistance, military assistance to Ukraine?

MS. DENMAN: I would love to be able to speculate on that, but I have not an answer for that.

MR. SCHIFF: But the only feedback that you received from other delegates was supportive of your amendment.

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MS. DENMAN: That's true.

MR. SCHIFF: And in the absence of that intervention, there was no reason for you to believe other delegates would have opposed your amendment.

MS. DENMAN: That's accurate. But you and I both realize you never know until something comes up for discussion what process and what road it will take forward.

MR. SCHIFF: Certainly.

So, when this change was proposed, did you agree to the change so that at least some of your language would go forward?

MS. DENMAN: Absolutely.

MR. SCHIFF: And you mentioned earlier that you made a personal decision not to relitigate this before the full -- would've been before the full convention or the full platform committee?

MS. DENMAN: I felt that it was -- that it should go forward. And if it could not go forward, as I personally thought it should go forward as such, that it was more important for it to go forward. Because we were coming, quite frankly, into a convention. Mr. Trump had won. He was our candidate, or would be by our process. And I felt that it was more meaningful and more important to go forward with it at least being addressed and not going to, shall I say, combat along the way or dissension along the way.

MR. SCHIFF: Let me, if I could, go through some of the documents with you.

There's a document that begins on Bates stamp page 4. It's a Washington Post article written by Josh Rogan entitled "Trump Campaign Guts GOP's Anti-Russia Stance on Ukraine."

In that article, on Bates stamp page 6, it quotes you as saying, "On the sideline, Denman tried to persuade Trump staffers not to change the language but failed. 'I was troubled when they put aside my amendment and then watered it down,' Denman told me. 'I said, what is your problem with a country that wants to remain free? It seems like a simple thing.'"

Is that consistent with your recollection of your conversation with Mr. Gordon?

MS. DENMAN: I didn't go into it with Gordon in that -- I did not go into it at that length with Gordon. With Gordon, it was, who do you work for, who are you calling, and what is your problem with my amendment? And he didn't give me an answer to what his problem was with my amendment. He simply said he had to clear it.

MR. SCHIFF: The article then goes on to say, "Finally, Trump staffers wrote an amendment to Denman's amendment that stripped out the platform's call for providing lethal defensive weapons and replaced it with softer language calling for appropriate assistance."

Is that the change that was made in the subcommittee?

MS. DENMAN: It was discussed in the subcommittee it would be worked on to go forward in the platform.

MR. SCHIFF: And then when you ultimately saw the language that they arrived on, it went from your language of providing lethal defensive weapons to "appropriate assistance"?

MS. DENMAN: Yes. And I saw that when I then went into full committee and we were given the printout of what would be in the platform to vote on as a whole.

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And I would like to clarify, if I may, sir, that I have never once sought out the press, called the press, in any way. The only interviews have been when the press has called me.

MR. SCHIFF: Bates-stamped document number 9 is an email to you from R.D. Fisher, Rick Fisher, dated July 21st, that says, "Thank you for offering an amendment on Ukraine that I understand was rejected by our nominee. I fear that many more issues of common sense will require that the brave stand up and continually demand that our freedom be defended. I hope that we are not headed toward a period of new darkness but stand ready to join you in shining the light. Sincerely, Rick Fisher."

Was Mr. Fisher also a delegate?

MS. DENMAN: No, no, no. If you don't know him, I'd like for you to sometime know him. But Rick Fisher I've known over a period of a number of years. He worked at the Heritage Foundation; he has worked elsewhere. I'd really like for you to know him sometime.

But he has focused primarily on international issues and primarily on China and the Chinese weapons that I've read his reading on for many years.

MR. SCHIFF: And how did he come to be aware of your amendment?

MS. DENMAN: Well, I guess people who are believing in the national foreign policy under Reagan, we keep in contact.

MR. SCHIFF: Let me turn your attention to Bates stamp number 12. It says: Diana Denman, RNC National Security/Military Platform Subcommittee Proposed Plank on Ukraine.

If you could take a look at it, is that the language, precise language, you offered at the platform subcommittee?

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MS. DENMAN: Yes. This is what I submitted.

MR. SCHIFF: Thank you.

If you look at the document that begins with Bates stamp number 13, are you able to identify in that document -- it lists on Sunday, July 10th, a platform committee meeting at 3:00 p.m. and subcommittee meetings the following morning.

Would you be able to identify when your subcommittee meeting met by looking at that?

MS. DENMAN: For the discussion -- when we went into the Sunday afternoon meeting, that was simply to sort of tell us where we were going to go and what we were to be working on as a committee.

MR. SCHIFF: So the subcommittee meeting that you had, then, does not appear on this schedule?

MR. DENMAN: No, it should be on the one on the 11th.

MR. SCHIFF: Oh, it's the one on the 11th. I see.

MS. DENMAN: Uh-huh. We were there that morning meeting from 8:30, theoretically, to 12:30.

MR. SCHIFF: Alrighty.

If I could turn your attention to the document Bates stamped number 25. This is an email from -- well, at the top of the page, it's an email from you to Victor Ashe (ph). The subsequent line says, "Re: Proposed insertion into 2016 RNC platform committee."

And it references a July 10th email from Victor Ashe (ph) that says, "I fully agree. I also feel we should endorse visa waiver status for Poland. I'm a former ambassador to Poland, 2004 to 2009, was an election observer twice in Ukraine,

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and did two IRI programs in Ukraine in L'vov and Odessa. Victor Ashe (ph)."

Was this an email along the lines that you were describing earlier of someone that wrote to you in advance of the committee meeting to express support for your amendment?

MS. DENMAN: Yes. He was answering when I had previously sent out the copy of the plank I was going to propose. He was answering that. And I took the reading -- the way I read it, I took it to mean that he would potentially be supportive.

MR. SCHIFF: Was he on the subcommittee as well?

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And if I could direct your attention to Bates stamp number 29 --

MS. DENMAN: I believe so.

MR. SCHIFF: -- which is an email from Matt Miller to yourself, the subject matter, "platform committee." Was this the email you referenced in which Mr. Miller introduced himself and forwarded a copy of his resume?

MS. DENMAN: Yes. I believe this is my only email from him. I believe. I think that's the only one -- I really had no contact with those people until I got into the subcommittee meeting.

MR. SCHIFF: Alrighty.

██████████ Five minutes.

MR. SCHIFF: If I could direct your attention to Bates stamp number 124, there is an email from Chuck Cunningham to Diana Denman in which I think there's an earlier referenced email from you. "Who do I submit mine to? Plus, the other members don't know the structure. Have one on the Ukraine."

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Were you seeking his help in terms of the process for introducing your amendment?

MS. DENMAN: I was really seeking -- Chuck Cunningham I've known for many years. He's a member of an organization I also -- I believe he is -- that I belong to. But he comes from the Christian right community. And I think I'm right in saying he still works on the right -- the gun -- what's the gun committee?

MR. DRISCOLL: NRA?

MS. DENMAN: NRA. I think he's still hired by the NRA.

But I found out that he was assigned to work on the platform process. And so it seemed a logical reach for me to reach for someone who knew me, that I could ask him how it should be submitted or the process about it.

MR. SCHIFF: If I could direct your attention to Bates stamp number 136, which includes an email from h-e-r-p-i-r-c-h.

MS. DENHAM: That is Herman Pirchner.

MR. SCHIFF: And is he with that institute that you mentioned earlier?

MS. DENMAN: Yes. He runs the American Foreign Policy Institute.

MR. SCHIFF: And there's an email from Mr. Berman (ph), or Elian Berman (ph), to him, with the subject, "Blurb on Ukraine, does this work?" Was that an internal discussion within the institute, or who was he emailing whom on this?

MS. DENMAN: Just Herman and ultimately to me, as far as I know.

MR. SCHIFF: And this was part of your vetting language on Ukraine?

MS. DENMAN: Yes. He has worked for Pirchner for many years. And, again, this foundation addresses first years ago into Eastern Europe and into Russia. They've done a lot of writing on Russia through the years, but also on, gosh, India and that area of the world with nuclear, et cetera, and then now China.

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MR. SCHIFF: If I could direct your attention to Bates stamp 143 from Philip Wilson to yourself that begins: "Hi, Diana. Thank you for your proposal. I just received a report last week from some missionaries that I've spent time with in Safarhozia (ph), Ukraine."

With this another response to your sending a draft of your --

MS. DENMAN: For my email that went out to delegates, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay.

I'm probably out of time, so I'll yield back, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CONAWAY: Ileana.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: Yes. Thank you so much.

Thank you, first of all, for your life of activism and being involved in the clear and present dangers that our country faces. Thank you for your work in helping the freedom fighters in Nicaragua and in El Salvador. So I appreciate your concern. Having been born in Cuba, we know that this action is still alive and well.

I wanted to cite a few statements made by Byron York -- I don't know him -- in the Washington Examiner on March 18th, 2017. And he says a key talking point in the theory that -- paraphrasing -- that Trump and the Russians conspired in the election is the allegation that, during the Republican Convention, the Trump campaign changed the GOP platform to weaken its stance on Russia's aggression in Ukraine.

And he says it's been cited many times; he says, the only problem is that it's wrong. And he cites Rachel Maddow, who said, "Donald Trump changed the Republican platform to what some experts would regard as pro-Russian." And then this is repeated by Clinton campaign manager Robby Mook and other folks.

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And NPR does a whole story.

So I look at the platform that was adopted --

MS. DENMAN: Yes.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: -- and I'm reading it. And it says, "We support maintaining and, if warranted, increasing sanctions together with our allies against Russia unless and until Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity are fully restored. We also support providing appropriate assistance to the Armed Forces of Ukraine and greater coordination with NATO defense planning."

So that's the platform language.

MS. DENMAN: That's the way it ended up, yes.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: Now, would you say that -- let me just have your opinion. Do you think that Maddow is correct when she says Donald Trump changed the Republican platform to become what some experts would regard as pro-Russia? Do you see anything in that platform language that hints at being pro-Russia?

MS. DENMAN: I don't recall that the subject of Russia was even discussed or we were aware of it before or during the convention.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: Because this seems rather strong. It says sanctions; they talk about Ukraine's sovereignty that should be fully restored, territorial integrity. It talks about appropriate assistance to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. I would not classify that as pro-Russia.

And, furthermore, in this --

MS. DENMAN: And I have to say, neither would I.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: I know. To call this pro-Russia, oh, my goodness, it's flabbergasting.

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Now, this article, this op-ed, also points out that, had your terrific amendment been adopted as you proposed it, whether one agrees with it or not, that it would have given the Ukraine section of the platform a lot more space, many more lines, many more words than other sections of the platform, perhaps an outsized section.

MS. DENMAN: That's true. That's realistic. And it would've added, certainly, length of wording to what had to be combined with the many issues that the party supports.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: That's right. So it would've been longer than, perhaps, some other issues that may be --

MS. DENMAN: Yeah.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: -- important or as important to others.

It also says that in your amendment you basically repeated points that were already in the platform. So it's probably unlikely that it would've been added in its entirety. A lot of what -- and I wish Ms. Stefanik was here, because she really knows about the platform. I have just a cursory knowledge of it, having been in conventions before -- that when people propose amendments and they get discussed --

MS. DENMAN: You can't get it all in.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: You can't get it all in. Right. It doesn't mean that they disagree, but perhaps stylistically or the length limitations or -- there's a lot of discussion about everything in platform language.

But I would say that, in my point of view, the sum and substance of this platform language is rather strong. And I feel strongly about Cuba and Nicaragua, and I would think that the sections about those areas, of which I feel

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UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

very strong, should've been lengthened or should've been stronger. But they're mentioned, and it's got a few sentences, and that's pretty good.

But to characterize this platform language that speaks about sanctions and Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, that speaks to providing appropriate assistance to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, is pretty strong.

MS. DENMAN: Uh-huh.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: And I would say that if you are a person who wanted to -- not you -- but ingratiate himself or herself with Russia, that would not be language that you would like, because it's not pro-Russia. And if you're a Ukraine native who doesn't want the Russian interference and doesn't like your territory to be eaten up by Russia, you would like the language that was finally adopted.

So I don't know the process worked, and we'll find out more about this, but it seems to me that to conclude that the platform was weakened in the end and that it favored Russia has a lot of interpretation and a lot of it is wrong.

MS. DENMAN: Uh-huh.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: So I thank you for the work that you did in proposing these amendments. I would think that you probably, if you had the time or the interest, you would've done it in many other areas, as well.

But you would probably agree with that kind of language. And I'm going to read it again. I just want to make sure -- "We support maintaining and, if warranted, increasing sanctions together with our allies against Russia unless and until Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity are fully restored. We also support providing appropriate assistance to the Armed Forces of Ukraine and greater coordination with NATO defense planning."

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

That's a pretty strong statement.

MS. DENMAN: And it certainly is a matter of record now.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: Thank you very much.

MS. DENMAN: Thank you.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: Thank you, Mr. Conaway.

MR. CONAWAY: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Nothing.

MR. CONAWAY: Adam, 15 minutes.

MR. SCHIFF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to ask you about some of the comments that J.D. Gordon made publicly and if they're consistent with your recollection of what took place.

In an article in TPM, it references an interview that CNN's Jim Acosta did with J.D. Gordon and states, "CNN's Jim Acosta reported on air that J.D. Gordon, the Trump campaign's national security policy representative at the RNC, told him that he made the change to include language that he claimed Donald Trump himself wanted and advocated for at a March 2016 meeting at then-unfinished Trump International Hotel in Washington, D.C."

Apart from telling you that he was on the phone with Donald Trump, did he make any other reference to this being consistent with candidate Trump's position?

MS. DENMAN: In no way.

MR. SCHIFF: In an article in Business Insider, it was reported, "One of the staffers, J.D. Gordon, the Trump campaign's national security policy representative for the RNC, told Business Insider last week that 'Ms. Denman's memory of events is inaccurate.'"

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Do you know what Mr. Gordon was taking issue with with your recollection of events?

MS. DENMAN: I really have no idea. But I only know what I know and what I witnessed.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know whether Mr. Gordon ever represented publicly that he never left the table to discuss the matter with the chairmen?

MS. DENMAN: I have seen in a press interview that he said that he did not -- I believe I'm right, that I read that he said he had not left the table, or he had not approached the delegates, and the fact that he did not, as far as I can recall, approach the delegates, he went to the committee chairmen.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, the committee chairmen were also delegates, were they not?

MS. DENMAN: It depends on how -- yes, as far as I know, they were delegates, but it depends, I guess, how you read the reading.

MR. SCHIFF: In a --

MS. DENMAN: But I will certainly reconfirm that he got up from that table and went and talked to the tri-chairmen. I stand by my memory.

MR. SCHIFF: So if Mr. Gordon ever did represent that he never left the table to discuss with the chairmen or the delegates, that would not have been an accurate representation.

MS. DENMAN: It is not accurate. He did get up, and he did go over to the tri-chairmen.

MR. SCHIFF: In a First Reading politics blog, you were quoted as saying, "Then the chairman sort of said would I agree to removing the use of lethal weapons out of it, and I said I really hated to see that removed. Because, again,

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if a country asks for weapons and we okay it, to not send them the appropriate weapons that they are coming up against in their enemy, it seems foolish, it seems irresponsible. But I said, if that's the only way it will pass, I would agree to seeing it removed. But I hated to see it being done. And, obviously, they were going to remove it one way or the other."

Is that an accurate recollection of what took place at the subcommittee?

MS. DENMAN: I think that's pretty accurate. My gut feeling, if we can call it that, my gut feeling was that they felt very strongly, whoever they were that were there, that they felt very strongly perhaps the wording should be changed.

MR. SCHIFF: And it was your sense that if you didn't agree to the watering down of the language, they would either remove it or defeat your amendment?

MS. DENMAN: I guess my priority, sir, was really that it go forward in the best way possible. And I did not want to defeat the potentiality of it moving forward.

MR. SCHIFF: Ms. Ros-Lehtinen asked you whether the language that was included was pro-Russian, and I think you indicated that it wasn't?

MS. DENMAN: No, I don't view it that way.

MR. SCHIFF: The language that you had proposed, though, was far stronger, was it not?

MS. DENMAN: In my judgment call, yes, it would have been stronger. Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And it would have been in Russia's interest, if Russia had a vote on this, to water down the language along the lines that it was ultimately watered down. Is that a fair statement?

MS. DENMAN: I don't know that. I don't know that they were involved. I

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

realized there's been a lot of press written about the situation. I do not know.

MR. SCHIFF: And I'm not asking you to speculate about that. But in terms of your understanding, with your experience, of what Russia sees in its interest, Russia would not see it in its interest to have Ukraine receive lethal defensive weapons, would it?

MS. DENMAN: Is that not the nature of war?

MR. SCHIFF: Yes, I believe it is.

So it would be your understanding that the change from your language to what was ultimately incorporated moved the language in a direction that Russia would favor, as opposed to your original language?

MS. DENMAN: Perhaps I was not, at that moment in time, thinking specifically whether it was Russia or any other nation that has entered the borders of the adjoining nation.

MR. SCHIFF: Let me ask you this way. From the Russian perspective, would they have wanted your language incorporated in the platform?

MS. DENMAN: As far as I know, they weren't there, so I would not have known.

MR. SCHIFF: But would it have been in Russia's interest to see Ukraine receive lethal defensive weapons, as you were advocating?

MS. DENMAN: How can I answer what I don't know?

MR. SCHIFF: Well, you know a lot about Russia and --

MS. DENMAN: Yes, that's true.

MR. SCHIFF: -- their involvement in Ukraine. And you were proposing this amendment, as I understand it, because you felt Ukraine ought to have the right to defend itself against Russia. Is that accurate?

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MS. DENMAN: I think that is accurate. I feel that any country that wants to control or support its future freedom has the right to have the availability of what is needed for them to stay free in combat or in a war against an encroachment. Yes, I feel that way.

MR. SCHIFF: And that might have required lethal defensive weapons.

MS. DENMAN: Well, it's pretty accurate -- thanks to the press, it's pretty accurate what level of sophisticated weapons are now being used in the Ukrainian war and what experimental weapons, as I understand it from my reading, that the Russians are producing to test in this combat.

MR. SCHIFF: If Mr. Gordon were representing that he never told you that he was talking with Mr. Trump, would that be a false statement?

MS. DENMAN: All I know are the three times he told me who he was talking to.

MR. SCHIFF: And that was Mr. Trump?

MS. DENMAN: But there are many Mr. Trumps.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, are there?

MS. DENMAN: Well, if I think about it, at least three. So I -- I just believe that --

MR. SCHIFF: Well, let me put it this way, that --

MS. DENMAN: -- he was overstating what I would simply call his job role or his position. I cannot identify from the other end of the phone who he was actually talking to or perhaps which member of the Trump family he was talking to, if he was.

MR. SCHIFF: But he did specifically tell you three times he was talking to Mr. Trump?

UNCLASSIFIED, COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

MS. DENMAN: He did.

MR. SCHIFF: I'll be happy to yield to Mr. Heck.

MR. HECK: Actually, Adam, you were covering the final two points I was actually going to follow up on.

But I do want to belabor a little bit this exchange in which you ask him, who are you clearing this with?

MS. DENMAN: Sure.

MR. HECK: To the best of your recollection, Mrs. Denman, his exact words in response to that question were what?

MS. DENMAN: What I have conveyed.

MR. HECK: Well, it isn't -- I don't know that we've ever discussed it or asked you in a way that asked you to specifically recall his exact words. Did he say, "I'm talking to New York"? Did he say, "I'm talking to Donald Trump"? Did he say, "I'm talking to Mr. Trump"? Did he say, "I'm talking to the candidate"? There are a lot of ways in which he could have conveyed that same information.

MS. DENMAN: All right. Let me convey it as accurately as possible. He said he was talking -- very succinctly -- I'm talk to New York. Where are you clearing it? I'm talking to New York. Who are you talking to? I am talking to Mr. Trump. He did not use -- other than that, he just said three times, I'm talking to Mr. Trump.

MR. HECK: So, in that answer, you used "New York" twice and "Mr. Trump" once.

MS. DENMAN: No. In that answer, he used "New York" once and "Mr. Trump" three times.

MR. HECK: Okay. So, on three different times, you asked him who are

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you talking to and he used the words "Mr. Trump."

MS. DENMAN: But it was successive, because it was still in the same conversation, quickly, back to back, when he said he was talking to Mr. Trump, and I kind of did a double-take and said, who are you talking to, and he said Mr. Trump. And I said, I'm going to, frankly, ask you one more time, who are you talking to? Mr. Trump.

MR. HECK: Why did you ask him a third time?

MS. DENMAN: Because I just simply didn't believe him. And when he said was on -- from my being involved as a volunteer politically all these years, we, frankly, have those who are hired to get on a campaign, and then they go to another campaign and they go on with their lives. And the campaign's over, you win or you lose, and those hirees gone.

And without, obviously, knowing the background, I'd never seen this man before in my life, I didn't even know his name, never heard it, in the world I've volunteered in, I just didn't believe that staff had the priority, nor did whoever was perhaps at that level, perhaps, that they had the time to be sitting on the cell phone or a phone somewhere following the time it took to go through our subcommittee meeting. There was a convention the next week coming up; there was a convention to go through. There were priorities certainly more than I felt on this. And we had a campaign, as the Republican side, we had a campaign to go and win America or lose it. And for what Gordon conveyed, for someone to be sitting there spending important moments in time to be focused on the one or two things coming out of the platform subcommittee, I just felt was, frankly, unrealistic and not sensible.

I hope I've answered that. I just thought he was trying to impress me and

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that he was --

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[12:39 p.m.]

MR. HECK: Did it work?

MS. DENMAN: Well, obviously it didn't. It hasn't. Didn't.

MR. HECK: And won't.

MS. DENMAN: And I have to honestly say that, as many of you have heard, I just thought he was overreaching his pay grade.

MR. HECK: Thank you.

Adam.

MR. SCHIFF: I just have a couple more questions. After the convention, did you have any further discussion either with Mr. Gordon or anyone else affiliated with the Trump campaign about the whole experience at the convention?

MS. DENMAN: No, I don't think -- no. Other delegates reached out to come and say -- it's something you just read, where the gentleman from Washington had been there with his father on a bible class he was teaching. I believe that's the Washington delegate. I believe that's him.

People came up to me, not a great many, but our delegations were -- it's a big convention. You've been to yours in your Democratic field. And there are a lot of people, and the delegates, the Texas delegation was pretty far to the back, and not many people dropped by.

MR. SCHIFF: But in terms of either later at the convention or after the convention to this date, has anyone from Trump campaign or Trump Organization reached out to you to --

MS. DENMAN: On this subject?

MR. SCHIFF: On this subject.

MS. DENMAN: Not one.

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MR. SCHIFF: Okay. In the -- in one of the articles I was drawing your attention to a moment ago, it also provides that another GOP delegate on the platform committee, Rachel Hoff (ph), is a national security analyst with the America Action Forum and believes the final platform language signals that a Trump administration would refuse to send lethal defensive weapons to Ukraine. Quote, "This puts Trump out of step certainly with the Republican leadership, but I would also say mainstream conservative foreign policy or national security opinion," Hoff (ph) said.

Did you meet with Hoff (ph) at all at the convention?

MS. DENMAN: Only in that she was seated to the left of where I was seated in the platform, the subcommittee.

MR. SCHIFF: And did she indicate to you at the time that she was very supportive of your amendment?

MS. DENMAN: She did, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And did she discuss with you her disappointment with how it worked out afterwards?

MS. DENMAN: Not particularly. Her issues were not -- as far as defense and military, her issues were very different from mine.

MR. SCHIFF: My staff may have a couple questions, but I'll yield back to you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CONAWAY: Ms. Denman, thank you very much.

Since we're delving into your opinion on things, "lethal defensive weapons" is a pretty narrow term. It was in your language. What wound up in the platform was appropriate assistance to the armed forces of the Ukraine. Under that heading, would lethal defensive weapons be included in the appropriate

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assistance or be excluded?

MS. DENMAN: I think, when you take a broad look at it, that could certainly convey.

MR. CONAWAY: All right. So would body armor be appropriate assistance?

MS. DENMAN: Oh, absolutely.

MR. CONAWAY: MREs, meals-ready-to-eat?

MS. DENMAN: AK-47s, the whole list of the sophisticated weapons today.

MR. CONAWAY: All right. So, just to make sure I understand, the language that wound up in there, in your view, did not limit the platform to -- or did not exclude the administration being able to provide that lethal defensive weapons that you wanted directly in your statement?

MS. DENMAN: Yes, I believe so.

MR. CONAWAY: Okay. All right. We're done.

MR. SCHIFF: Just one followup question on that, Mr. Chairman.

But removing "lethal defensive assistance" from the amendment that you offered --

MS. DENMAN: The original, yes.


MR. SCHIFF: -- did mean that the Republican Party platform would not be on record explicitly supporting lethal defensive weapons for Ukraine. Isn't that correct?

MS. DENMAN: I think they had another -- they chose another way to say it.

MR. SCHIFF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CONAWAY: Anything else?

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 No, sir.

MR. HECK: Mr. Conaway, can I go on record agreeing with you that I also believe, having consumed some of them, meals-ready-to-eat can, in fact, be lethal weapons?

MR. CONAWAY: Ms. Denman, thank you so very much for participating this morning, and we're adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:45 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

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